The interior of the house (Plate 5, Fig. 27a and 27b) consists of a single empty room, broken only by the isolated posts (the central supports of the ridgepole). In some cases I observed that these posts were handsomely carved, but only in houses with one central post. The carvings showed stylized or modified human figures (Fig. 19) and quite faithful representations of animals. I recall, for instance, a very beautiful post on which was pictured a pig biting the tail of a leopard, which I saw in the village of Bingomo (Abäi family).

Along the walls there are low benches of which I have seen two different types. The simplest benches, hence the ones designed more often for temporary meeting houses, consist of the trunks of umbrella trees (Musanga) which have been split lengthwise down the middle or of raffia stalks which have simply been placed across two shelves of the same wood (kũ'dũ III). The same kind of bench is always found in places where there is no raffia and also in huts that serve as lodgings for guests. The second type of bench (see Fig. 28 and 29) is a rectangular frame of raffia stalks (enõ̌n) split lengthwise down the middle; its narrow side consists in each case of two legs (a = akõ-ŋ̌ŋõ̌k) with pointed pins (c = mbə̌n -ak. I Fang, oŋ̌n Jaunde) which pierce and hold together four layers, placed on top of each other: the lowest, a wooden ledge, and then three raffia stalks. The wooden ledge (b = oŋ̌gmə̌ja-enõ̌n) has a central section cut out for the support of nine or more stalks (e) wedged into it, which constitute the seat of the bench; the three raffia stalks (d = kũ'dũ -enõ̌n III) serve to hold down the latter and also as a head and foot rest. Sometimes there is also a back rest (f = aŋ̌gebə̌ -enõ̌n), consisting of a raffia stalk split lengthwise down the middle and simply placed on top of

Fig. 28. Side of a Bench.

the lengthened pin of the back legs.

In some meeting houses the front legs project to form a semicircle which covers up the narrow sides of the head rests. The outer surface of these semicircles is either carved to look like a face or else incised and provided with decorative surfaces which are painted red and white (Fig. 29). /Fig. 28 appears here in the original text./ /67/

Next to the benches, the most important part of the furnishings of the meeting house consists of a number of logs which are placed together to form a fireplace (see Fig. 27). During the day the fire burns constantly, and during the night the logs are placed together so skillfully that the fire often keeps going until the next morning. /Fig. 29 appears here in the original text./ The importance of the cheering fire in the tropics is greater than one might believe; not only does it serve as a protection against the frequently severe morning chill and warm the room on days when the weather is rainy and cold, but it is also the only means of protection against the exceedingly annoying sand flies, Culicoides (afi,ge), tiny, scarcely visible insects whose sting causes an unpleasant itch like that of stinging nettles.

For the rest, the furnishings of the meeting house consist only of such items as drums (wooden and skin drums), a whetstone, and, suspended from the roof, the large hunting net which the inhabitants use communally on drives. In some cases I also found gun racks (ekob e nga), Figure 30, which are attached to the wall in the same way as we attach clothes hooks. Guns are placed on these racks so they are handy in case of a sudden attack. Another form of this rack (Fig. 31), likewise not common, consists of a board which is pointed at the bottom and provided with a hole at the top. This gun rack (efa[k] -e-nga) is planted in the ground in front of the meeting house. The butt end of the rifle is placed on the ground and the barrel is put in the hole in the board.

The skulls of hunted animals are frequently kept in the meeting house as hunting trophies. Either they are held under the roof mats by means of poles, or they can be seen lying around on the roof; only large skulls, like those of elephants, are sometimes placed in front of the house. /Fig. 30 appears here in the original text./

Drawing 1

Drawing 2

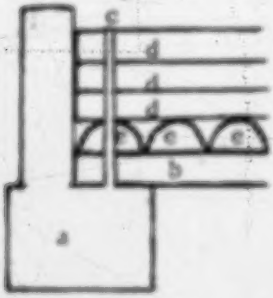

Fig. 29. Painted Socle of a Bench in a Meeting House, Fang Region.
Drawing 1, front view;
Drawing 2, side view.

In many meeting houses, furthermore, one sees /68/ a forge (Fig. 27b, Drawing 1 b) and the tools used by a smith, namely, a bellows suspended from the roof (Fig. 27b, Drawing 1 c) and a smith's stone (Fig. 27b, Drawing 1 e) which at the same time is used as a whetstone and also as a fan for the fire (cyuh e nduan), Figure 32. Finally we must also mention the famous tobacco pipe made from the stem of a banana leaf, which is placed across two hooks in the wall.

It goes without saying that in addition to the above-mentioned furnishings there are all kinds of rubbish lying around in the house, such as half-finished baskets, fishing nets, tools, leftover food, and so forth, scarcely designed to give the whole a more attractive appearance. /Fig. 31 appears here in the original text./

Fig. 30. Rifle Rack, Engugumo, Fang.

The meeting houses are very seldom embellished with decorative bark, either on the outside (Fig. 33) or on the inside. More frequently, however, we find the bark walls, especially on the gabled sides,

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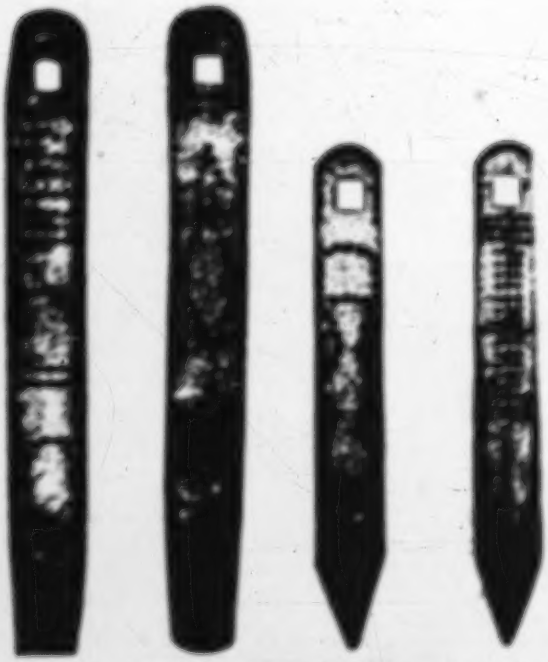

Fig. 31. Rifle Stands. Owong (Ewondong Family), Fang.

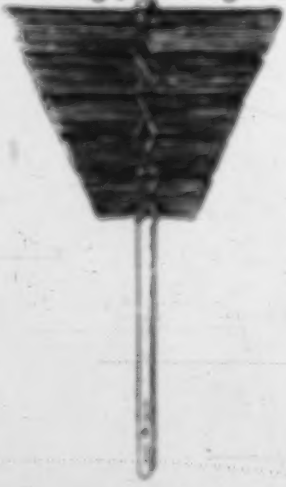

Fig. 32. Fan for the Fire.

Fig. 38. A Dwelling of the Fang.
The right half of the front wall and one side wall have been removed for a view of the interior.

half of the front wall have been removed in order to provide a full view.

The four corners or at least three of them are occupied by sleeping benches (Fig. 37 a) which are constructed exactly like the benches of the meeting houses. The distance between the head and foot rest, however, is only about three quarters body length, so it is necesary to lie on them with one's legs drawn up. The sleeping benches extend to the door posts and thus take up most of the room in the house. On one of the narrow sides and between two sleeping benches is the fireplace (Figure 37 b), that is, a few logs placed together and serving both as a hearth and a stove. Over the fireplace is attached a device for drying and storing food and dishes which is put together in the following manner (Fig. 39). A frame covered with plaited raffia strips is laid over the door posts (a) and two forked sticks driven into the corners. This is the "pot loft," akán e mvé (c); one can usually see a number of pots and a clay water bottle on it. Other things, which even for the Negro cannot be designated as "valuable possessions," /74/ /Fig. 38 appears here in the original text/ are also found there, such as banana bowls, maize spindles, to whose use I shall return later, and so forth. Under the pot loft hangs the drying loft or "ground-nut loft," akán owǒnǒ (d). As the name indicates, this loft

342 serves only for the storage of groundnuts and is likewise usually made of plaited raffia strips. Then there is the most important household item for the housewife, the pantry, in the form of a storage box, bū bū or bū u (e), intended primarily for meat and other delicacies. This box is often very nicely made with raffia pith. In front it usually has a small protruding ledge on which salt, pepper, and spoons may be placed, and thus it serves as a kind of "dumb-waiter"; at the side it has an opening that is closed by means of a sliding door made of pith. The box fills the space between the beds so that it is barely possible to stand there. One or two drying or roasting boards, etăn (f and g), hang under the box, just above the fire. These boards are used for roasting groundnuts and for drying things.

On the opposite wall at the same level a similar frame is put up, over which drying boards can be placed and from whose front edge the women's long baskets (nkūn I) are hung. There is floor space under this frame, a sleeping bench may be placed there, covered with baskets, grindstones, and other tools, or with the assorted possessions of the head of the household. A person who enters the house for the first time finds himself in the middle of the passage between front and back door, not knowing which way to turn. To make room at all it would be necessary to clear everything out; otherwise a European would find the house uninhabitable. In the north, /75/ especially among the Bulu and in part also among the Ntum, the huts are somewhat more spacious and habitable.

For hanging up baskets, calabashes, satchels, and other objects on the wall, the Pangwe makes use of a natural hook (ekŏ'b), that is, a piece of a tree trunk which is cut out just above and below a branch. The branch is cut off, the remaining stump is cut more or less to a point, and then the whole piece is inserted, in the same position as it was on the tree, between the longitudinal raffia strips on the inner side of the wall. Objects are very readily attached to the wall by means of raffia stalks stuck between the mats, from whose free ends they are suspended.

An important piece of furniture is the round, three-legged stool [58] (kpă III), Figure 40, carved out of wood and decorated all around its edge with ornamental chip carving.

its edge with ornamental chip carving. It is placed on the ground, often in the vicinity of the door posts, and is considered, so to speak, as a place of honor -- for strangers and the paterfamilias -- like our sofa.

As a final household implement the sweeper should be mentioned. It appears in various forms, depending on whether it is used in the dwelling, for the benches of the meeting house, for the meeting house floor, or for the village square.

For the house a broom evũ ă[k], Figure 41 a, is used, made of raffia leaves tied together in the shape of a fan. "More elegant" brooms are used by the Jaunde for the benches of the meeting houses. These are made of pieces of liana stalks, Ertela scandens Benth., Leguminosae, called ntñ (b), or of the flowers of the oil palm (c). The pieces of liana stalk are slit so that they form something like a brush; these brooms therefore correspond more or less to our dusters. A third form of broom (Fig. 42) consists of two little wooden boards tied with strips to a handle. /Fig. 39 appears here in the original text./ /76/ It resembles our snow shovels, but it is by no means to be found in every village, and even where it is found it is infrequently used.

In the preceding descriptions the reader will have been struck by the frequency with which the raffia palm is mentioned as construction material. It is indeed true that this palm, called "bamboo" in Negro English, is by far the most important and most valuable plant

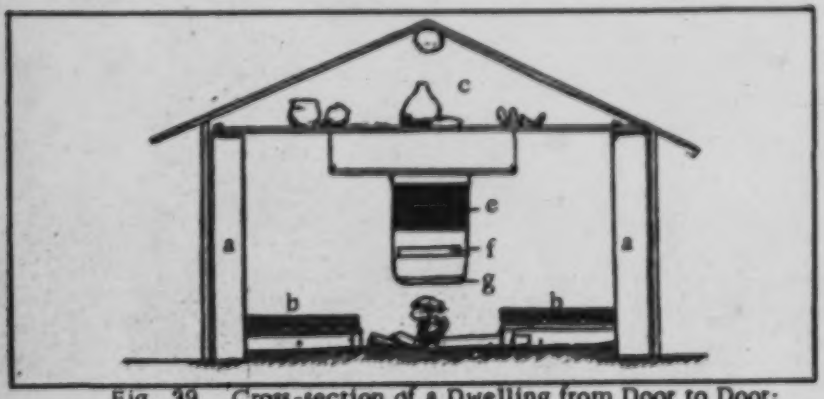

Fig. 39. Cross-section of a Dwelling from Door to Door: a, door posts; b, sleeping benches; c, pot loft; d, loft for drying groundnuts; e, pantry; f and g, roasting boards.

for the Pangwe. Where it is scarce, as in Yaoundé /Ger., Jaunde/ it is imported from great distances whenever necessary.

In the Campo-Uelle region there are four species of raffia. Of these, Raffia hookeri M. (esa) is to be found only along the banks of the larger rivers; Raffia regalis M. et Wendl. (andzim), on the other hand, grows only on hilly terrain and even there very sparsely. The following appears in swamps (1) and may

1. Hence, ndzim = swamp and raffia palm (collective name).

Fig. 40. Fang Stool.

be designated as the true raffia palm: Raffia vinifera P.B. (nia dzán = true, authentic raffia), the common species. Finally, there is a species (akō'dō), recognizable by the fact that its leafstalks are tinged with blue, which is frequently found scattered among the above species. The general name for raffia, dzí-h, indicates its importance; it means "the mother of the village." /Fig. 40 appears here in the original text/ dzía (n, see "Suffixes" /not translated/), because the whole village is made of raffia, and indeed no name would be more fitting considering all that is produced and constructed from it. The following list will give an idea of its multiple uses.

I. Foodstuffs

1. Palm cabbage.
2. Pulp.

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Fig. 117. Assoko from Alén (Esáuong Family), Spanish Guinea.

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Fig. 118. Ntum Preparing Ornamental Helmet Crests, Akonangf, South Cameroons.

1: Tessmann--207 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 FH9 Fang FH9

/200/

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Fig. 152. Tattoo Artist at Work, Nikolentángan, Spanish Guinea.

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Figs. 153 and 154. Knives without Handles for Tattooing (ekut).

Fig. 155. Knife for Tattooing (bendolo).

The stool is a valuable piece of household furniture, a luxury object, for which the natives are willing to spend some money. For this reason its manufacture is an important branch of wood carving, and the makers of well-finished, artistically decorated stools are famous persons, much in demand. If they wanted to, they could make a considerable amount of money with their art, and they also could elevate the art itself, but with their congenital laziness, a special inducement is always required before they will take the trouble to start a new project. For example, a guest in the house of such an artist sees a beautifully carved stool there and says: "Oh, what a beautiful stool; you could make me one like that." Perhaps others have uttered the same wish, and so the artist finally pulls himself together, goes into the jungle, and cuts down a trunk of the Apocynacea Alstonia congensis Engl. (ekûk), the only tree suitable for the manufacture of stools. He must choose a trunk which -- after the bark has been pulled off -- has the same diameter as the proposed stool /221/ (Fig. 172). He takes the trunk with him to the village and cuts it into about five to seven disks as thick as the stool is intended to be tall. Then with his cutlass he draws a line around approximately the middle, and this line indicates the lower edge of the seat. From there he cuts three radial grooves downward, deepens them with an adz (ngbwâk IV), Figure 173, and in this way forms three legs. Then the seat is made smooth and held over the fire until it becomes nice and brown. The edge is rubbed clean with the rough leaves of the Ficus exasperata Vahl (ekōkō' Fang, akō Ntum) (1). The edge and the

1. Root kō, "to rub"; compare a-kō-k, "grindstone."

legs are colored with redwood and dried for an hour in the sun; finally they are decorated with carved patterns, an artistic addition which is not everywhere uniformly successful. /Fig. 172 appears here in the original text./

Ordinarily a stool maker finishes from two to three pieces in one day. The price is so low (two spears, the equivalent of 14 pfennigs, apiece) that it is difficult to conceive how the man can work for it.

1: Tessmann--238 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 FH9 Fang FH9

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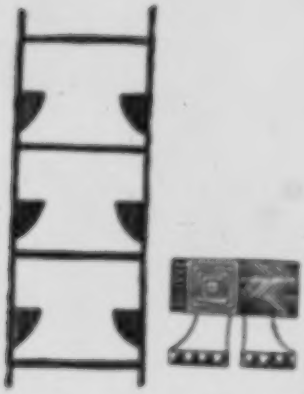

Fig. 172. Stages in Making a Stool.

322 The explanation lies in a kind of principle of reciprocity, a princi-
476 ple clearly stated in the educational precepts to be discussed in a
435 later section /Ed., Vol II/, that is, the seller counts upon the fact that later he will need his client who is in turn a specialist in the manufacture of some kind of article (basketwork plates, for instance), and he then expects to be treated in the same lenient
[443] manner. As a result of the excessive division of labor, everyone is dependent upon everyone else, and this dependence keeps the prices down. Wherever this dependence is absent, the prices go up. Europeans, for instance, with whom such a silent agreement does not exist, pay considerably more, ten or twenty times more, and at the same time they have to put up with inferior work as well.

322 Moreover, the sale of objects manufactured for household use
434 is not regarded as an enterprise for profit. When I asked a stool
554 maker whom I befriended what his business brought in, he first

[412]

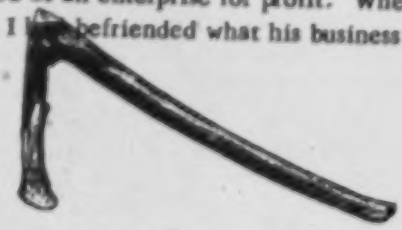

Fig. 173. Adz.

1: Tessmann--288 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 FH9 Fang FH9

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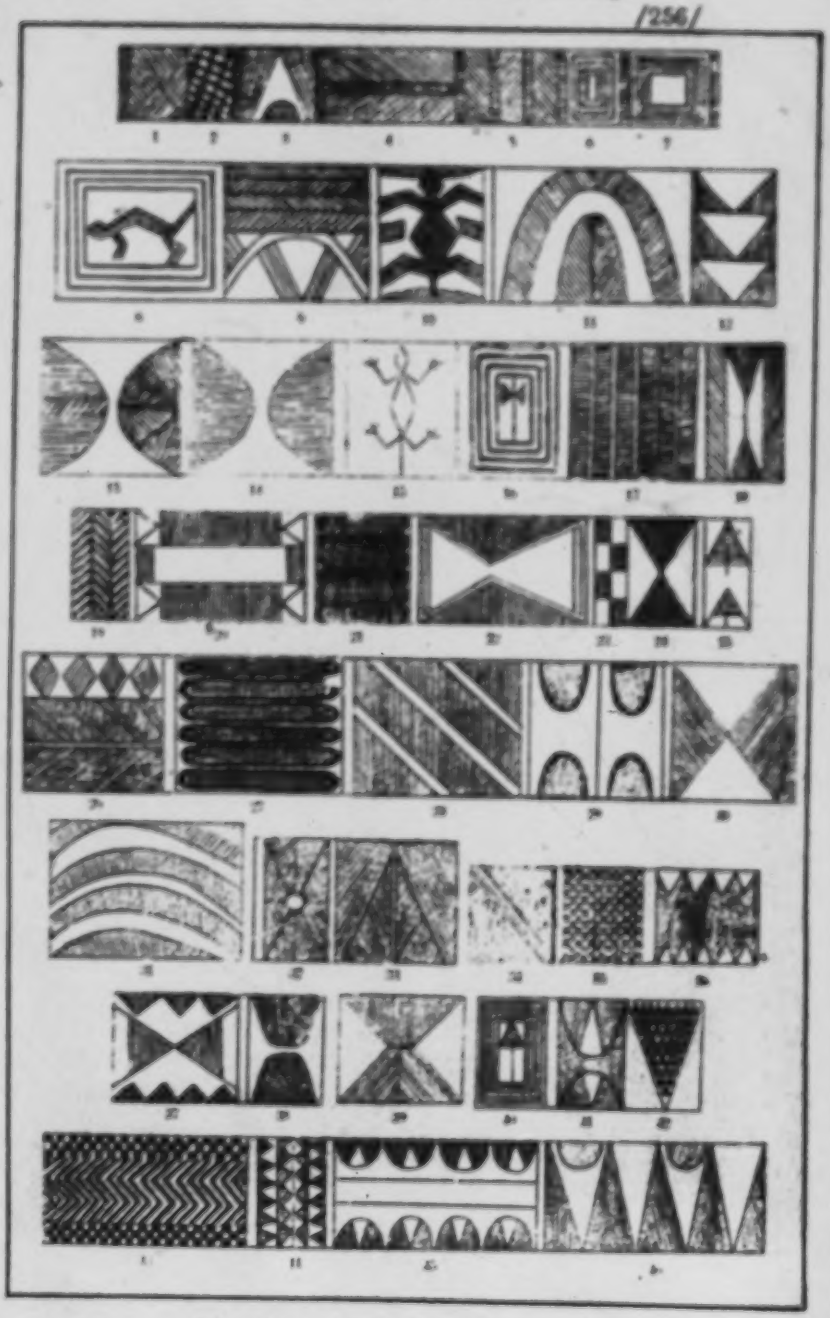

Fig. 212. Stool Patterns.

8: Balandier--76 E-5 (1946-1951) 1955 FH9 Fang FH9

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land, which the Pahouin will never acquire, for he considers it humiliating, he will perhaps develop a taste for the profit resulting from this work."

conquering society has imposed on the old Fang village an appearance which has often been mentioned: two uninterrupted rows (nkara) of huts surrounding a kind of courtyard closed at each end [712] by a "guardhouse" (abém̃); sometimes a palisade of posts enclosing a banana plantation serves as a protection in the rear. Inside the huts there is only a limited amount of things which are easily [858] transportable: "goods" of value are stored in chests, the ancestors' altars (biéri) are kept in large cylindrical boxes. (2) There is no

2. Very similar to the "baskets of ancestors" carried by the Ba-kongo during their great migrations.

doubt that the grouping lived for a long time in a state of insecurity. This was primarily the factor which intervened to maintain a minimum size without which there was no real security. The causes contributing to the breaking up of groups, the organization of Fang society itself, the search for women and goods, and, finally, the agricultural methods, were dominated and largely impeded by this necessity. It appears certain that really large villages existed at the beginning of French occupation. V. Largeau refers to mfag with eight or ten "guardhouses"; F. Grébert speaks of ten to twenty of these "guardhouses," (3) and F. Meyé asserts

3. F. Grébert. Au Gabon [In the Gabon], Paris, 1932.

that "the normal population of a village was from 80 to 170 warriors, exclusive of women and adolescents." (4) According to estimates

4. Quoted by G. Sautter, op. cit., p. 124.

country and in the north of Boulou country) has put a considerable brake upon village nomadism, the planters not liking to move away from their plantations. When there is migration, the activity consists rather in the "swarming off" of a portion of the inhabitants, who go to found a new hamlet in a site favorable for cultivation, without there being from then on any necessary correspondence between family structure and settlement pattern. The new ja1 will no longer necessarily correspond to one family but may gather together several families from different and unrelated lineages (mvam).

The Pahouin village of former times was planned for defense. Situated in an oblong clearing, usually within reach of the nearest village (3 to 4 kilometers) by drum-telephone (nkul), it comprised two lines of contiguous rectangular huts, gable to gable, on either side of a courtyard or main street (nsɛ̃), blocked at either end by a guardhouse /men's house/ (aba, abɛ̃) allowing only a narrow entrance, often oblique, which was barricaded every evening. All doors gave onto the nsɛ̃; the outer walls having merely a few loopholes. Sometimes the village was encircled by a moat (ɛsaiak) and traps, sometimes also by a stockade /akak). The most important subsistence plots (mefup) were in the forest, often quite far away, but near the village behind the huts were banana groves and kitchen gardens, while medicinal plants (bilok bi mebiaɲ) as well as tobacco were grown in the central nsɛ̃. The hut walls were made of bark (particularly of certain kinds of Ficus /fig/) which was wetted, then beaten flat and dried to form boards; these are the "carbotes" (from the English word "cardboard") still in use on the coast. These boards were fastened by lianas and pegs to posts set in a rectangle. The double pitched roof was of "tiles" made of raffia folioles (ɔbaɛ́, pl. abaɛ́) folded in two and pinned with wooden splinters to the scantlings made of /42/ strips of the main leaf rib set parallel to the ridgepole. This ridgepole rested on forked posts, of which the two central ones had magical significance and were usually carved or at least painted. The dimensions of these dwelling huts rarely exceeded 6 by 3 meters, while those of the guardhouses (meba) might reach twice this. In each household the man had his private hut where he kept his most valuable possessions (biɔ̃m): chests containing loincloths, etc., weapons, drums, "medicaments" (mebiaɲ), his own seat, masks, and magical equipment. The women's huts, side by side with his and where the young children slept, were used as kitchens and contained carrying

baskets, storage baskets (binaan), crockery (viek), or imported "negro pots" /sic/ (minkeli), the drying rack, shrimp nets, mortars, and other feminine implements. The young unmarried men slept in the guardhouse; the girls slept with the women. A jal occupied by an average-sized family might be 50 meters long. Large minlam reached half a kilometer, in which case the mɛɛn was divided into sections by the secondary meba of each family. The chief lived in the middle and had a larger aba than those of other families.

This kind of village has almost entirely disappeared. Bark huts are still extant in a few isolated villages in Gabon, but they are increasingly rare. In actual fact, one finds almost everywhere the hut of reinforced banco /wattle and daub?/ (the wattle consists of laths made of the main ribs of raffia, incorrectly called bamboo), imposed on Boulou country around 1925 by an administrator called Nkulu (meaning "the Tornado"), which has left its mark throughout Pahouin country. These huts are usually rectangular but tend, in prosperous villages, to be influenced by European forms, with T-, U-, or H-shapes, with verandas and lean-to showers. They are often plastered with kaolin (kɔm) sometimes mixed with red or green ocher or with imported laundry blueing. The roof is still usually of raffia tile, but it may have four slopes or be even more complicated, copied from European roots. Each family has its own privy (ɛ́duk).

The layout of villages has likewise changed. The most prevalent plan keeps the single central mɛɛn /street/, but the huts are in four lines on either side and are separate, no longer contiguous. The men's huts are nearest the road, the women's, now called kisin (cuisines /kitchens/), are laid out behind, or sometimes around, the husband's. The plaster is often painted in fresco with various subjects —copies of pictures in magazines, religious subjects, in Boulou country illustrations from the novel Nnanga kɔ̂n (1), portraits of

1. The best Boulou painter of recent years was David Mone:woso, a Yemfek from Sangmélima, who not only established the iconography of Nnanga kon but is also a good portraitist and a remarkable painter of animals.

Europeans famous locally or internationally. The aba /guardhouse/ has lost its defensive character and often take the form of an airy

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

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FANG MEN.

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FANG HOUSE.

[p.66(B)]

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

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FANG DANCE.

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516

ABEMO OR PALAVER HOUSE.

[p. 66(D)]

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

site for their villages. The houses can be readily taken down and erected elsewhere. The earth floor is often beaten very hard, no covering is used. The beds are made of bamboo poles resting upon end pieces, supported by four forked corner stakes. The bed is raised about one foot from the ground. In most houses are four beds, two at each end on opposite sides, having a log fire burning between, the smoke escaping through the thatch roof. The furniture is all movable, and consists of stools, camwa bowls and boards, drinking gourds, fish nets, water gourds, various baskets and hanging bamboo shelves for drying fish and corn over the fire. Food, guns and powder horns are hung up on wooden hooks suspended by bush rope; these hooks are made by cutting a suitable branch from a young tree, having a strong crotch. No separate portion of the dwelling is set apart for sleeping or eating. There are no windows to a Fang house; at night one or more pieces of bark are used for a door. All the domestic arrangements are excessively filthy. Refuse from meals is unknown, everything is eaten, including entrails and skin of animals and fish. Before occupying a new house the witch doctor (*nyengon*) is usually called to perform the ceremony of propitiating the evil spirits (local spirits), and the *bieng Elwei* (fetish) is hung up and becomes the protecting fetish of the household. This fetish is hung up over the doorway outside. The houses are built entirely above ground, the roofs are made of split bamboo and covered with thatch made from the long tough blade of a swamp reed, or rush. This thatch makes a most excellent roof, and when well put on, it is able to withstand three years of the terrible rains which fall during the long wet season.

V.—*Navigation, Hauls, Nets, Fishing, Traps.*

The Fang use long narrow canoes. A suitable tree having been found is felled and trimmed, then hollowed out with the small native wedge. All the boats are open and both sides of the canoe alike. The women use the same canoes as the men and paddle them very skilfully. War canoes are made large and strong, but are otherwise similar in construction to the canoes in daily use. A kind of lugger sail is used and the natives sail a thin canvas very close to the wind. The baler used is made of wood; it much resembles a large flat sugar scoop and is common among tribes along the west coast. This baler is used most skilfully and with great rapidity by both men and women. In paddling, no fulcrum whatever is used. The men and women either sit or kneel, grasping the paddle handle in its upper and lower thirds they plunge the blade deeply into the water, and force the canoe ahead with great rapidity. One man, woman, or a child steers, using an ordinary paddle; the time kept while paddling is excellent, and is usually kept by one man chanting a Fang song, not unlike a white sailor's shanty, the paddling taking on renewed vigour during the chorus. The sails are usually made now of imported trade cloth, but I have seen them made from the native bark cloth. Only one sail is used and the canoes are able to beat up well against the wind.